Relative Duped Him on Spy

By Donald P. Baker
Washington Post Staff Writer

A Rockville mathematician, who is facing spying charges, has indicated to the FBI that he was duped by a relative into covering up the fact that photographs of secret documents copied at his home were turned over to the Russians.

Sahag K. Dedeyan, 41, was arrested at 9:40 a.m. yesterday at his home, 16204 Grist Mill Rd. by FBI agents and taken before a U.S. commissioner in Baltimore where he heard details of a criminal complaint that accused him of "failing to report the illegal photographing of national defense information."

The alleged photography apparently took place, without Dedeyan's knowledge, at his previous residence in Montgomery County in March, 1973, while Dedeyan was employed as a senior mathematician at Johns Hopkins University's Aplied Physics Laboratory in Silver Spring, according to FBI documents.

Dedeyan, a former math teacher at Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring and the University of Virginia, could get up to 10 years in prison and be fined $10,000 on the charge against him.

Acording to the documents, Dedeyan said that in March, 1973, he showed and discussed with a distant relative a 70-page secret document, which Dedeyan had written as part of his work at Johns Hopkins. The document was entitled, "Vulnerability Analysis: U.S. Reinforcement of NATO."

Dedeyan told U.S. agents that it was several months later, during another visit by the relative, Sarkis D. Paskalian, 36, of New York City, at Dedeyan's house, that Dedeyan learned that Paskalian had photographed the NATO study and passed it on to the Russians. Dedeyan said he agreed to keep silent about the action, and several months later, he received from Paskalian, on still another visit, an envelope containing $1,000 in old $20 bills, which Paskalian said he was passing on from the Russians "as a token of our appreciation."

Both Paskalian and Dedeyan were natives of Beirut, Lebanon, but it was not revealed whether they knew one another before Paskalian came to the United States in 1971.

Dedeyan resigned from Johns Hopkins in September, 1973, and took another top-secret position as mathematician at Operations Researc Inc., a few blocks away in Silver Spring.

Dedeyan quit his position at ORI two weeks ago, telling friends and associates he and two other men planned to set up their own business in Gaithersburg.

ORI President Harvey D. Kushner issued a statement yesterday afternoon saying that the firm, which has numerous contracts with the Defense Department and other federal agencies, would not comment on the incident because "it is our understanding that it (the spying incident) predates his hiring in October, 1973."

Personnel records at Johns Hopkins

By Gerald Martineau—The Washington Post

Evelyn Sticht of the Operations Research Institute, where Sahag K. Dedeyan worked, reads statement to the press.

Photographs, Accused Man Says

showed that Dedeyan married Elizabeth Yazujian, an American of Armenian descent, on Feb. 1, 1959, and that the couple has three chidlren, Sare Sabag, 15, a sophomore at Magruder High School; Margo Hamest, 13, an eighth grader at Redland Junior High, and Susan Anoosh, 7, a second grader at Casbell Elementary School.

At the time that the secret NATO documents were alleged to have been copied, Dedeyan and his family lived in a modest Cape Cod house in the working class Twinbrook neighborhood of Rockville at 5910 Halsey Rd.

He moved to 16205 Grist Mill Rd. in a more expensive new subdivision called Muncaster Hill View near Olney in late 1973. At the new neighborhood, friends described Dedeyan as a hard-working family man who cared for his garden and yard. The Dedeyans reportedly have a $45,000 mortgage on their Dutch Colonial home, which cost about $65,000.

Josephine Dickens, who lives next to the Dedeyans at 16205 Grist Mill Rd., said Dedeyan was "a friendly, helpful neighbor who helped us put in our storm windows and things like that. He was always working in the yard."

Mrs. Dickens said the Dedeyans frequently had large numbers of Armenian guests, and liked to have barbecues in their sprawling backyard.

She said Mrs. Dedeyan told her a week ago that her husband was going to "set up a business on his own, with two associates, and that if things didn't work out, he could go back to his old job" at ORI.

Mrs. Dedeyan told Mrs. Dickens that her husband thought that age 41 was "the right time to make a change to be independent."

Mrs. Dedeyan remained at home with the children most of yesterday, after the FBI agents served a warrant on Dedeyan in mid-morning. She declined to comment on the investigation.

Another neighbor, Navy dentist Jim Frazier, of 5300 Jamie La., said the Dedeyans were "extremely nice people" who invited most of the neighbors to a cocktail party last Christmas, but otherwise kept to themselves.

Mrs. Dickens, who is Argentinian, said the Dedeyans had "mostly Armenian friends, dentists, doctors, and were well-known in their society."

She and other neighbors called Dedeyans arrest "a shock."

William E. Buchanan, supervisor of external relations for the John Hopkins lab, said Dedeyan's record "shows that he was competent, and left us voluntarily."

Buchanan said that upon learning of the incident yesterday, laboratory officials "immediately began our own investigation, which is not concluded."

The Hopkins laboratory is located at 8621 Georgia Ave., about three blocks from the ORI headquarters, at 1400 Spring St.

Records at Johns Hopkins indicated that Dedeyan became a naturalized American citizen in 1963. He was born in Beirut on May 10, 1934.